

## DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 043 614

TE 002 032

AUTHOR Reid, Loren  
TITLE The Discipline of Speech.  
INSTITUTION Speech Association of America, New York, N.Y.  
PUB DATE Jan 67  
NOTE 10p.  
JOURNAL CIT Speech Teacher; v16 n1 p1-10 Jan 1967

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.25 HC-\$0.60  
DESCRIPTORS \*Communication (Thought Transfer), \*History,  
\*Intellectual Disciplines, Professional  
Associations, Rhetoric, \*Speech, \*Speech Education

### ABSTRACT

In spite of the diversity of subjects subsumed under the generic term speech, all areas of this discipline are based on oral communication with its essential elements--voice, action, thought, and language. Speech may be viewed as a community of persons with a common tradition participating in a common dialog, described in part by the memberships and activities of its learned societies. Speech as a separate discipline evolves from (1) the informal rhetorical theories of the Egyptians (2900 B.C.), (2) the systematic treatises of Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and Augustine, (3) the 18th century concern for communication in a parliamentary society, (4) the 19th century interest in language and style, and (5) the 20th century need for a clear, precise system of communication based upon research using such modes of inquiry as description, experimentation, and historical or rhetorical analysis and synthesis. Since the act or process of communication (an essential function of mankind) is the domain of the discipline of speech, and is a necessary element in most intellectual and scientific disciplines, the practitioners of speech must construct relevant programs which provide links between theoretical principles and effective practices. (JM)

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE  
PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS  
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
POSITION OR POLICY.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPY-  
RIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED  
BY

*Speech Communication  
Association*

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING  
UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. OFFICE  
OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION  
OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PER-  
MISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

# The SPEECH TEACHER

Vol. XVI, No. 1

JANUARY, 1967

## THE DISCIPLINE OF SPEECH

Loren Reid

THE term *speech* is more than fifty years old. Originally it was proposed as a generic term to include public speaking, discussion and debate, oral interpretation, phonetics, voice science, speech pathology, drama, and related subjects. Almost from the outset, however, it did not entirely suit teachers of drama, so that some of the earliest departments were entitled "Department of Speech and Dramatic Art." Teachers of speech pathology and of radio-TV likewise have tended to drift away from *speech* as an all-inclusive term.

No other term, however, serves so well to describe the broad area just indicated. *Speech* associations include teachers of all these subjects, and *speech* journals publish their research studies. Hence this paper will use *speech* in the original, generic sense. Despite different interests and emphases, practitioners of this discipline start with a common base—voice, action, thought, language—in short, with some variety of oral communication. At times, however, this paper will make specific references to various of the individual subjects.

Although the development of the

Loren Reid (Ph.D., University of Iowa) is Professor of Speech and Chairman of the Department of Speech at the University of Missouri. He has served as Executive Secretary of the Speech Association of America from 1945 to 1951 and as President in 1957. The present article was adapted from a paper prepared for the Hawaii Curriculum Conference, Honolulu, June 6-17, 1966.

discipline the last half century has been especially striking, its heritage of theory and practice stretches back to ancient times.

### I. SPEECH AS A COMMUNITY OF PERSONS

A discipline may be viewed metaphorically as a community of scholars sharing a domain of intellectual inquiry.<sup>1</sup> The members of such a community inherit a common tradition and participate in a common dialog.

The speech community can be described in part by scanning its learned societies. The Speech Association of America is one of the oldest and is the most inclusive. It has a current membership of more than 6,000. More than 2,500 libraries subscribe to its publications. Its annual conventions attract from 1500 to 2000 people, who listen to papers covering every conceivable aspect of the discipline. It promotes research, sets standards, maintains a teacher-placement arm, and advances in various ways the professional concerns of the discipline.

Membership in the Association is drawn largely from the United States, but since the contributions of American scholars have attracted attention the

<sup>1</sup> Part of the discussion in this paper based upon points of view expressed in Arthur R. King, Jr. and John A. Brownell, *The Curriculum and the Disciplines of Knowledge* (New York, Wiley, 1966).

Copyright 1967, Speech  
Association of America.

ED043614

world over, its membership roll and library roll include currently twenty-two foreign countries. Many predict that the Association will eventually incorporate the word "International" in its official title. Its range of activity is shown in that it is a constituent member of the American Council on Education and an institutional member of the National Education Association.

Closely related are the American Educational Theatre Association, the American Speech and Hearing Association, the National Society for the Study of Communication, the National University Extension Association, the American Forensic Association, and others. Each of these in years past has met concurrently with the Speech Association of America, and some still do. Each is, however, a separate and independent organization.

Regional associations abound, serving Eastern, Central, Southern, Western, and Pacific groups. Most of these have memberships in the neighborhood of 1,000. The newest, the Pacific Speech Association, last year had a membership of 165, a doubling over the previous figure. These regional associations are each the national organization in miniature; in addition they serve regional cultures and regional needs of accreditation, standards, and research. Forty-five states have state associations.

Another category of organization, serving special interests, includes Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha, Pi Kappa Delta, National Forensic League, National Thespian League, and half a dozen others.

Most of these associations, including the state groups, publish journals. The Speech Association of America publishes three principal journals: *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Speech Teacher*, *Speech Monographs*. These have a combined circulation in excess of 10,000.

In addition to the annual conferences sponsored by these associations, dozens of city, sectional, and regional organizations hold meetings to discuss special problems. Each winter, for example, directors of the beginning speech courses in ten universities from the central part of the country meet to discuss pedagogy and to plan research. Contests and festivals in debate, dramatics, oral interpretation, discussion, and individual speaking, at both high school and college level, are held by the hundreds. Teachers and students alike have opportunity to see what is going on in other schools and to listen to the observations of critic specialists. Students exchange ideas and bring recognition to their institutions by their participation in these nation-wide events.

In these and other ways the growth of the speech community since the founding of the Speech Association of America in 1914 has been phenomenal. I know of no intellectual movement in education that approaches it. At the turn of the century our forebears had been placing excessive and outmoded emphasis on matters of voice, gesture, and other sorts of forms and conventions instead of upon the meaning of the idea or emotion being communicated. The spirit of inquiry and research had too long lain dormant. I still occasionally meet someone who had a speech course long ago, who possibly was exposed to the older system of teaching, and who still thinks of speech as being entirely concerned with refinements of gesture or niceties of voice. But the founding of the new association, however, provided new leadership. Old concepts were reexamined; many were kept, some were swept away. Scholars became concerned with the history and rhetoric of the discipline, with its relation to science, with its possibilities for creativity as one of the arts. Over the country



by the scores and later by the hundreds new departments were organized. Graduate study at the doctoral level got under way. Especially after 1930 was the pace accelerated. In 1932 a grand total of 30 Ph.D.'s had been awarded by 5 institutions. By 1966 the number was in excess of 3,000 awarded by 47 institutions. Another 159 institutions now regularly offer master's degrees, the total of which has now exceeded 22,000.<sup>2</sup>

So far the community described has been the academic one. Many practitioners of the discipline are attached to hospitals (speech pathology and audiology), to theatres (drama), to broadcasting companies (radio-TV-film). Tangential also, is a vast group of others who communicate: statesmen, preachers, diplomats, attorneys, journalists, salesmen, physicians, and scores of other categories. It is not necessary to argue the usefulness of speech in the pursuit of a vocation.

Actually the community also has a remote past and a beckoning future. Primitive man could improve his lot not only because he had (a) a fore-brain, (b) fingers and opposed thumb, and (c) a superior heart design; but also because he had (d) the faculty of speech. Quite possibly some elemental ability to communicate was the prime factor in bringing man's unicellular ancestor out of the primeval ooze. At any rate, with his communicative faculty and his anatomical advantages man was able to dispose of or manage creatures that were bigger, tougher, and faster than he. Leaving behind this prehistoric speculation and turning to the speech community of the foreseeable future, we can see that as population increases, as nations become more numerous, as domestic and foreign problems become

more complex, as business and professional life becomes more competitive, the need for oral communication—largely through face-to-face discussion—becomes imperative.

## II. HISTORY

Originally the name of the discipline of speech was *rhetoric*. Early statements in the field of rhetorical theory were informal, but eventually systematic treatises appeared. Many of these latter contained observations about the management of the voice, so in a way they foreshadowed present-day speech correction and pathology. Some of them also offered comments about drama and the theatre, but this area independently brought forth treatises in *poetic*. The discussion that follows, however, is limited in the main to the development of the rhetorical aspects of the field of speech.

Rhetoric has been defined today as the rationale of discourse. The discourse may be entertaining, expository, persuasive. It may be spoken or written, though for most of the way this paper will deal with spoken discourse.

In one form or another the discipline goes back, so far as there are records, 5,000 years. Egyptian papyri roughly dated 2900 B.C. contain bits and pieces of rhetorical advice.<sup>3</sup> The *Precepts* identified with Kagemni and Ptah-Hotep clearly show that the Egyptians were concerned about principles of speech. "If you carry a message from one noble to another, be exact in the repetition . . . give his message even as he hath said it." This statement foreshadows the current interest in listening. "If you are in the council chamber, follow the procedures." This statement

<sup>2</sup> Each year the August issue of *Speech Monographs* provides complete statistics.

<sup>3</sup> See the article by Giles Wilkeson Gray, "The Precepts of Kagemni and Ptah-Hotep," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XXXII (December, 1946), 446-454.

foreshadows parliamentary orderliness. "Avoid speaking of that of which you know nothing. . . . If you know what you are talking about, speak with authority, and avoid false modesty." This statement is good medicine in all times and places.

The Greeks undertook the problem of systematizing rhetoric, as they systematized politics and a good many other theories. Wisely has it been observed that if a modern thinker starts down a long, dusty road of reflection, he will not have gone far before he meets an old Greek trudging back. Corax in 466 B.C. was the first to make clear that rhetoric involved principles—that it was not merely a knack or skill or gift sent from heaven—and that these principles were teachable and learnable. He demonstrated further that rhetoric had a structure, an organization, an architecture, a design—and that a message set in a frame would be more clear, more persuasive, than one lacking pattern or contour. The human race never learned a wiser or more enduring lesson. From his slender quiver he drew another powerful bolt: since human problems are wrapped in contingencies, alternatives, choices, rhetoric must involve itself with what is likely and believable as well as with what is certain and provable.

Corax's rhetoric was a vast improvement over the timid Egyptian cautions and admonitions. Greeks who followed him fleshed the bones, each with his own contribution. You meet their names in any history of education. Protagoras reminded his students that there were two sides to any rhetorical act. Prodicus was interested in the correct use of words. He sought exactness and in so doing probed into the study of synonyms. Lysias was the first ghost-writer. So good was he that of 233 speeches he wrote, only two failed to

achieve their purpose. He opened the secret of ghost-writing: strive not for a universal style but select a style that somehow fits the person for whom the speech is being ghosted. Gorgias demonstrated the uses of artistry in oral composition. Isocrates deserves more than these sentences, being memorable because he scrutinized the character of the speaker. "Words carry greater conviction when spoken by men of good repute than when spoken by men who live under a cloud."

Contemporaries can be proud to practice the same intellectual discipline that these towering Greeks helped to develop. But mightier rhetoricians were still to come. Plato, like Corax, saw the virtues of form. The message should have a head, a body, and a tail, like a living creature. But Plato did more. As he looked around him, he observed the varying mood and temper of listeners—the nature of the human soul, as he called it—and noted that the message must be adapted to the different kinds of soul: the calm, the angry, and so on. Plato, who spoke through Socrates as through a mask, uttered much in criticism of rhetoric, but these comments are passed over in favor of the powerful support he gave it. Without rhetoric, even one who knows the truth—this is Plato speaking—is unable to persuade. The naked truth itself is valueless—but the combination of truth and rhetoric forms a lever that can move the earth.

When Aristotle moved onto the Athenian scene, he could draw upon this substantial body of rhetorical theory, plus the contributions of dozens not mentioned. Moreover, he could hear effective oratory in the courts and in the public places. Following his natural bent, he constructed a system of criticism. Its framework in a nutshell: the speaker, the speech, the person ad-

dressed. Here are a slender five of the leading Aristotelian ideas:

1. A listener can be persuaded in any or all of three ways: through the character of the speaker, through the logic of the argument, through his own feelings and emotions. Any other way of persuading a listener—i.e. with the help of a shotgun—would have to be called non-rhetorical.

2. The character of the speaker is of paramount importance. This statement has grown in significance through the years. Today, knowledge being increasingly complex, we must depend upon one another—we must take one another's word—more than ever.

3. A speech has four parts. You must state your case and then prove it—these are the two most essential parts. But, audiences being what they are, you are advised to open with some kind of introduction and finish with some kind of summarizing, interpreting, or action-seeking conclusion.

This notion has proved extremely helpful over the years. Think again of the pupil in the classroom, reporting on a school project. He is so full of his subject that he forgets his classmates are still empty. So he plunges into the middle of his exposition. Places, events, people, are named but not identified. The listeners are puzzled like playgoers who arrive late. Somewhere in his education this pupil overlooked the Greeks. Better remind him to start at the beginning (Plato); listeners being what they are he should open with some kind of orienting introduction (Aristotle).

4. The end and object of the speech is the audience—the listener—the judge. Aristotle elaborates on and systematizes Plato's notions about the audience. Listeners can be viewed according to their age, their wealth and position, their mood and temper.

5. Language is a matter for careful attention. First of all, it must be clear. Not to be clear is to fail at the outset. Second, however, it must have another quality: interest. Here come the aspects of vividness, color, strikingness, force. Here are metaphor, inversion, parallel structure. Each of these qualities must be used as appropriate to listener and occasion. English and speech teachers, playwrights and sermonizers, presidents and ad-writers, all spend countless hours on this ancient formula.

Aristotle applied the same kind of intellectual vigor to the answering of basic questions about drama and the theatre. In his *Poetics* he talked about plot, character, diction, thought, melody, and staging. He discussed the requirements for a tragic hero, the formula for developing a plot, the catharsis that must be wrought in the spectator. He saw the close relationship between rhetoric and poetic (for example, the speaker could learn about delivery by observing the actor, and the playwright could enhance the thought, the message, of his play through applying principles of rhetoric). The two arts, however, were beginning to develop their own rationales. More could be introduced at this point about the historical development of poetic, with appropriate reference to Horace, Longinus, and others.

Nor need the history of rhetoric be discussed lengthily, other than to call a few illustrious names. Marcus Tullius Cicero—the "sweet Tully" of succeeding centuries—acquired the unique distinction of being the only celebrated orator to set down a systematic treatise on the theory of oratory. Cicero gathered his rhetorical notions under five headings: (a) idea, (b) organization, (c) delivery, (d) style, and (e) memory. Quintilian, well known to historians of education as well as to teachers of speech,



evolved a theory of teaching the young speaker that covered his entire career, starting with the selection of a proper nurse (she should not have a faulty dialect) and concluding with advice about the proper time to retire (well before being completely done in).

In the pages of the Greek and Roman rhetorics are written the early beginnings of speech pathology. The classical writers and those who followed distinguished differences in loudness and quality. They observed weak voices and thin, hoarse, rasping voices. They wrote advice about the speed of utterance. They noticed that breathiness obscured resonance and carrying power. They were aware of mannerisms like excessive heaving and panting. They noted that a few pupils hoisted phlegm from their lungs and sprayed their listeners. They commented on vocalized pauses like *uh*, *uh*, *uh*. They advised against visual intrusions like excessive movements of the tongue or lips. They did not, however, set down much in the way of therapy: singing, proper diet, and exercise appeared to them to be generally efficacious.

Much of what the early rhetoricians said can also be applied to the teaching of English. Aristotle had much to say about grammar and syntax, though it happens to be Greek that he was concerned with and not English. Cicero's contributions to style are well known. High school students can today venture only a little way into Latin before they confront Cicero. He shook Latin style, loosened it up, replaced its formal correctness with colloquial vigor, introduced all sorts of stylistic adornment.

In the Middle Ages the spokesmen of the Catholic church needed to develop and defend their doctrines, both from schism within and from heresy without. This defense called for close reasoning, a need that sent priests like Saint Au-

gustine back to their logics and rhetorics. Eighteenth century England, busy with the development of a parliamentary society, concerned also with the need of communication in the law court, the pulpit, and the university, provided a fruitful climate for intense rhetorical output. The fulsome nineteenth century busied itself particularly with matters of language and style. On the list of distinguished theorists are English names, Scottish names, Irish names, American names—one from this last group being John Quincy Adams, scholar, diplomat, president, congressman, and lecturer on rhetoric at Harvard.

The steadily mounting interest in science of the twentieth century stimulated the need for a system of communication that combined clarity with persuasiveness. In turn rhetorical principles themselves have been supported or modified by experimental investigation. Researchers in speech and also researchers in sociology, psychology, and social psychology have launched inquiries concerning the credibility of the speaker, the organization of the message, the behavior of the listener. "Speaking behavior" is a relatively new term that has come to the discipline. The line of thought, however, is continuous; the old questions are being cast in more specific language and are being approached through new techniques.

### III. MODES OF INQUIRY

Broadly, three modes of inquiry are available to the practitioners of this discipline: (1) historical or rhetorical analysis and synthesis, (2) description, (3) experimentation.

1. The method of analysis and synthesis leans heavily on documents, witnesses, texts, and inferences therefrom. It employs many of the procedures of the historian as it inquires into the

authenticity of documents, the problems of selection, arrangement, and interpretation. It explores and compares different drafts and versions of a speech (or of a play), searches journals and diaries, pores over contemporary correspondence, reads newspaper accounts, and looks for other evidences of preparation or presentation. It may utilize personal interview. Principles of criticism are examined, applied, and compared as the investigator moves into matters of language structure, and the other sorts of appraisal that he makes of the speech, the debate, the literary interpretation, the play.

2. Descriptive research utilizes surveys, questionnaires, samples, case studies, rating scales, statistical procedures.

3. Experimental research involves a hypothesis, a design, control of variables, statistical or other methods of analysis and comparison, interpretation of findings.

With these modes of inquiry at his command the researcher is able to seek answers to a variety of questions. He may want to know why Sir Winston Churchill was an effective speaker—or why, for that matter, a certain teacher gives an exceptionally clear lecture or a certain pupil makes an excellent recitation. He may want to know how to rate or rank good speaking, or good reading aloud, or good acting, in his classroom. He may want to know the optimum size of a class in a given subject—and to that end may construct a questionnaire. He may want to know which of two speeches, experimentally contrived to focus on a rhetorical principle, was more effective with listeners—and so he invites listeners to state their opinions on the subject before the experiment and after. He may want to identify a group of the best speakers, or the best teachers of public speaking

or acting, and, having located this group, study it to learn more about education, experience, methods of teaching.

Although this paper has suggested three modes of inquiry, the discussion that follows is limited only to the first—the method of analysis and synthesis. Each is highly specialized: this writer deals with the method he knows best.

a. What does a practitioner *do* when he makes or gets new knowledge? He starts by asking a question, generally dealing with the effectiveness of a speaker, or of a group of speakers. From this question flow scores of lesser questions: sources of ideas, preparation of speeches, characteristics of presentation and delivery, the occasion with any special significance or meaning attached, organization, language, evidence, style, the audience, the effect or influence. Note that these questions are distinctive to this discipline and are not likely to be systematically pursued by practitioners of another discipline. After having asked his questions, he proceeds by observing, or interviewing, or by reading correspondence, journals, and newspapers. He goes from general materials (like biographies) to specific treatises (like articles, monographs). Since, however, most of the data in which he is interested are not likely to have been utilized by other kinds of researchers, he soon finds himself plunging into original documents. Since the spoken word is elusive, he is particularly interested in eye-and ear-witnesses, if the passage of time has not been too great. His search is illuminated by the theory of the discipline, though he is as alert for variations and exceptions as for exemplars.

b. What evidence is he willing to consider? He is willing to consider all kinds of evidence, the biased as well as the impartial. Any one may or may not like any speech. Like the historian, how-



ever, he tries to be aware of possible bias, distortion, special or vested interest, that might debase the testimony. Along the way he may have to restate or modify his original question or hypothesis. He is guided by reports of the way the speech was received by the contemporary listeners. Churchill's speech was or was not effective with the 1940 House of Commons. It may also have qualities of universality that make it appealing to later generations of readers. The researcher seeks a preponderance of evidence on one side or the other. If he is seeking various opinions about Truman's speaking, he might note that Democrats tend to approve, Republicans to disapprove. If to Democratic approval he can add evidence of Republican approval, plus approval of neutrals like London editorial writers, French political commentators, etc., plus the subsequent indorsement of events, he emerges with a favorable verdict of Truman's speech-making and is correspondingly more certain that the verdict is an accurate one.

c. What is the end point of his inquiry? He does, or should, end with a synthesis: he illuminates the special nature of the virtues of the speech; if he identifies short-comings, he relates those to the whole picture; he compares or contrasts the speaker with others; he estimates his effectiveness, both for his own day and for the foreseeable future. The end point is thus an appraisal, a judgment, an interpretation. It is not a formula for success, but it may have ingredients that warrant emulation; it may reemphasize old principles that are teachable once again to others.

d. Have newer modes of inquiry been added to the discipline recently? Recently criticism has been launched against Aristotelian or neo-Aristotelian standards of criticism in favor of standards that are more flexible and

adaptable. Modern researchers try not only to answer the standard questions more or less applicable to any rhetorical event, but also to probe into the special conditions of time, place, or circumstance that might lead to more helpful analysis and synthesis.

Here is considered only one type of investigation. Those familiar with surveys, rating scales, questionnaires, experimental design, and other techniques could supply a parallel set of answers to questions (a) through (d).

#### IV. DOMAIN

The domain of the discipline is the act or process of communication. No institution, system, or process can exist without it. Take as an example the scientist working in his laboratory. This task would appear to be a lonely and isolated one. First of all, however, he needs to ask himself: Has this problem been solved already? Are others now working on it? Second, while he is working on it, he needs to communicate with others: to gain financial support, to seek technical assistance with details. Third, when it is finished, he needs to tell two groups of people about it: other scientists, to whom he will talk in a technical language; laymen, to whom he will talk in everyday idiom. Actually the lonely scientist is becoming more and more scarce. The big problems call for teams of scientists. If one of the team cannot communicate effectively, he is by that much not only less of a communicator but less of a scientist.

When the teacher of speech talks about communication, however, he means more than the crude, barren, minimal transmission of an idea. He holds steadily in mind the communicator, the message, the medium, the receiver. He wants the idea to go from communicator to receiver in its greatest effectiveness. The teacher of oral inter-

pretation guides students of a poem, an essay, a speech, or other literary work into a careful study of what the words on the page mean. This study should lead to a penetrating inquiry into author, setting, circumstances, and other factors as relevant. Mind, voice, and body must then be set to work, in a disciplined manner, at the task of putting the meaning of the words into visible and audible symbols. If what is done is sincere, honest, intelligent, the listener will have a fuller appreciation of the work than he would have had otherwise. The teacher of acting sets about much the same task, using different conventions and a different medium. The speech clinician may appear at times to be working entirely with the vocal problems of the communicator, but he, too, is well aware of voice and articulation simply as parts of the total communicative act. Enough has already been said about rhetoric and public speaking to show again the interactions of speaker, message, and listeners to understand, to change or modify a belief, or to take action.

Speech is based on principles that are teachable and usable. Its practitioners are aware that there are exceptions to these principles, and so it is not a science, *per se*, though certain aspects of it, like phonetics, pathology, and audiology, have solid scientific underpinnings. It is not merely a technique, a knack, a skill. None of these words says enough; *principle, method, system, rationale* are more descriptive. As students master the principles, they improve, and the fact of their improvement is noticeable both to themselves and to their classmates. Although there has invariably been a backward glance at native talent and genius—the claim that speakers are born and not made—there has been a positive insistence that nearly everyone can improve. This be-

lief finds strong support in the study of the careers of eminent speakers—those who might be thought to have the greatest natural gifts. Here it is found that Clay, Webster, Calhoun, Bryan, Roosevelt, and others had ample instruction in speech while young men. All of them gained public speaking experience in the classroom, in the debating society, or in both. Each of them served an arduous apprenticeship. Webster, for example, was so gripped and seized with stagefright at Exeter Academy that he could not speak at all. From this tender beginning he rose to the heights.

The discipline of communication has close ties with nearly every other discipline that might be mentioned, perhaps excluding botany. Graduate students in speech regularly find that their assignments carry them to the general, classics, physics, psychology, education, language, mathematics, chemistry, physiology, and law collections. They customarily seek out supporting courses in other disciplines. One writing a dissertation, for example, on a nineteenth century orator would find it advisable to have courses in history, literature, and political science. If he had an experimental problem, he would find himself in various psychometric and statistical studies. If he operated in speech pathology, he would study anatomy, neurology, psychology, physiology, and related fields; and as a practitioner would consult and confer with orthodontists, pediatricians, orthopedic surgeons, clinical psychologists, and others, as well as with parents and teachers. The graduate student in drama draws upon theory and practice of other arts, and from history, psychology, or sociology. National speech conventions often invite to their programs professors of these related disciplines to share in both general and special discussions.

Speech journals likewise invite scholarly articles from practitioners in these adjunct fields.

As the Committee on the Nature of the Field of Speech has worded it, speech, like other contemporary academic disciplines, has moved from its original center into expanding segments of specialized study. The report of the Committee continues:

Today the specialist in speech may find his interests akin to those of the linguist who analyzes the structure of spoken language, the psychologist who relates verbal behavior, the sociologist who relates social structure to symbolic interaction, the anthropologist who studies the structure of culture, the philosopher who investigates the problem of meaning in everyday language, and so on.<sup>4</sup>

Says Gilbert Highet, in his Art of Teaching: "Communication, the trans-

mission of thought from one mind to others, is one of the basic activities of the human race; it is . . . an art without which genius is dumb, power brutal and aimless, mankind a planet load of squabbling tribes. Communication is an essential function of civilization. Teaching is only one of the many occupations that depend upon it, and depend upon it absolutely."<sup>5</sup> Statements that set forth the qualifications of an educated person, or that define the place of a discipline in the curriculum, include the requisite that the ability to express oneself orally is an essential attribute. The nature of the discipline of speech as described in the foregoing pages suggests its relevance to society, its concern with intelligent inquiry on the part of both teacher and student, and its utility to the individual as he goes about his business of making a living.

<sup>5</sup> New York, Alfred A. Knopf, p. 97.

<sup>4</sup> Donald K. Smith, Andrew T. Weaver, and Karl R. Wallace, in Quarterly Journal of Speech, L (February 1946): 67.